UNITED WE STAND, DIVIDED WE FALL

Bulletin by J. C.SPURLIN

Behold how good, and how pleasent it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. (Psalm 133:1)

For ten years the Church of Christ of which I am identified has enjoyed peace, and tranquility. We have been successful in building a few meeting houses, and holding a few mission meetings. In other words we had just begum to get over the division caused by the innovation known as the Sunday School. For over 50 years we as a remnant from that terrible, and dastardly division imposed upon the Church of Christ by the Sunday School Movement, have labored faithfully , against odds of division, and if we are to suffer another division, it will require 50 years to overcome the same.

It has been called to our attention, of recent weeks concerning a movement designed to further the gospel of Christ. The advocates of which argue that we are not doing what we should for the Master; to that we heartily agree, but brethren, don't you know we can do more united than divided? And don't you know that Paul tells us in 1 Cor. 1:10, we are all to speak the same thing, and that there be no divis-ions among us? It seems to me it would be much more Christ-like to be working for those things that make for peace rather than consider some-thing that is sure to cause division, make shipwreck the faith of some weak folks, and slap the Lord in the face for praying the prayer in John 17th chapter.

For us to advocate anything that is not authorized by the word of God is not of faith, and if not of faith, it is sin. (Rom.14:23). Then too; without faith it is impossible to please him, for he that cometh to God must believe that he is and is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. (Heb.11:6). We shall not be surprised if the advocates of the movement go right on, only to say they will press the matter, and let the chips fall where they may. One brother has made the statement in our presence, that the movement has already caused division, in California. Be assured brethren that anything that cause division in the Church of Christ is wrong. O but they say, "We are striving to carry out the Commission, and must therefore; carry on, even though a small group as hobby riders do oppose our plan."

Speaking of hobby riders, that is exactly what the Sunday School folks called us; yes hobby riders, but dear friends, do you know what a hobby rider is? Lets have Webster tell us; A favorite object, pursuit or plaything". Now who is it that is toying with a plaything? In the division over the Sunday School it was none other than the ones contending for the very thing that divided the Church of God. To be plain; who drove the wedge that split the church wide open? Was it the ones that put the Sunday School in the Church, or the ones that opposed it? Everyone knows if they would admit it, it were those contending for the Sunday School; all of which was a fulfilment of 2 Tim.4:3-4, "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lust shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and shall turn their ears away from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables". Now let us see what Webster says about a fable, "A fiction, a falsehood."

Funk, and Wagnalls NEW PRACTICAL STANDARD DICTIONARY says. "A foolish or improbable story". Dear friends, what is more foolish or improbable than to toy with something that is sure to divide the Church of Christ? Which is the lesser of the evils, to pierce his body on the cross, or drive a wedge into his body, the Church? At this point may I remind my readers that to tamper with the church of Jesus Christ, is to molest the body of Christ. Col.1:18.,and too, since the body, the Church is a blood bought institution, it is quite possible to come up with the blood of Christ on our hands. I greatly fear there is more involved in this wrangle than many realize.

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I am so greatly concerned about the matter, I have written a number of brethren, hoping that we might reach a better understanding of the matter, and thus find a common, and scriptural way whereby we could save the Church of the terrible disaster, of being divided again.

But says one of the adverse faction, "We who are for the plan do not think the matter so grave as the opposing forces have pictured it." Maybe so; but did you know the issue has reached such proportions as to make division almost inevitable?

I have been quite reluctant to write on the issue, due to the fact we did not have sufficient evidence to justify my speaking up. However in recent weeks the seeds of discord has been privately sown, in the various congregations, throughout Texas and Oklahoma, leaving a trail of confusion for us to work with.

Whereas; each and every member of the body of Christ should be cultivating ways and means to make the Church a strong and formidable institution. One that every member of the body can point to the Lord's prayer in the 17th chapter of John, and say, we are one as Christ, and God are one. May I remind the ones that sows the seeds of discord, that the present congregations are the results of a long, and strenous fight with the Sunday School folks. Moreover; we who have labored, and sacrificed to strengthen the present congregations, in view of helping to establish others, are not likely to give up without a fight. For we are admonished to fight the good fight of faith; 1 Tim.6:1,. And listen to that great man Jude, "Jude the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called." Did you know there is no preservation in division, (emphasis-mine) Mercy unto you, and PEACE, and LOVE be multiplied. (Not destroyed, but MULTIPLIED--emphasis JCS).

Beloved when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. Did you know brethren that when we are sowing the seeds of discord we are in a measure denying the Lord Jesus Christ, and God the Father? For the prophet Amos said, "Can two walk together, except they be agreed? (Amos 3:3). Then in John 17:20-21, Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be ONE; as thou Father art in me, and I in thee. That they also may be ONE in us; THAT THE WORLD MAY BELIEVE THAT THOU HAST SENT ME." Again hear ye Paul in 1 Cor.1:10, "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of the Lord Jesus Christ (authority) that ye all speak THE SAME THING, and that there be NO DIVISIONS among you; but that ye be PERFECTLY JOINED TOGETHER IN THE SAME MIND and in the SAME JUDGMENT." Thus we have three passages of scripture all reminding us that we are to work together for unity. But says one, "we are not progressing as we should; we need to put men in the field; true enough; but zeal that is not seasoned with knowledge is a dangerous thing. Listen to Paul in Rom.10:23, "Brethren, my heart's desire , and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved. For I bear them record they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge, for they being ignorant of God's righteousmess, and going about to establish their own righteousness have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God." Thus we learn that zeal is something to be harnessed with knowledge.

To illustrate: If we through overmuch zeal pool our resources, in a central collecting agency, or pledge our contributions, to help further the gospel, it could easily terminate into a missionary society. and thereby get entirely out of the jurisdiction of the congregations sponsoring the effort. The one or ones handling the funds (might not) but could easily reach the point where they could put the man of their choice in the field. (Cont'd on page # 3)

Reydon will not sponsor, or help to sponsor a preacher that is mixed up on the marriage question.

Now the thought of Christian liberty, to use our liberty or priviledge in serving God, is like driving on a ledge overlooking a terrible preci -pice; that is; dangerous at the best, therefore; to enjoy the least bit of safety requires awareness; and that at all times: otherwise we may find our selves falling hundreds of feet to our death. Peter sounds a warning to that effect, 2 Peter 1:5-10, And besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue,; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience god-liness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.

For if these things be in you,and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren, nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord , and Saviour Jesus Christ.

But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.

Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things ye shall never FALL.

We do not deny there is Christian liberty, and when properly used can bring about a world of pleasure, and happiness; but when misused may mean chaos, and disaster.

Soon after the end of the law of Moses many of Christ's disciples, including his apostles were baffled, and confused; not knowing how to meet the challenge were caught up in a state of indecision; however the apostle Paul appearing on the scene soon after the ascension of the Lord, with his education and ability was able to set them right. Gal.2: 11-21.

In 1 Cor. 8th chapter, and the 14th chapter of Romans. He (Paul) warns us as to the use of our Christian liberty, we do not need to quote these scriptures, as though our readers never heard of them, that we will have to give account as to how we use them; for we mist rightly apply the scriptures. (2 Tim.2:15).

One more topic, and we shall close. In Rev. the 2nd chapter, we have Christ's warning to the seven Churches in Asia. Beginning with the first verse, we read; Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus; write these things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlestick;

I know thy works, and thy labor, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars:

And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name sake hast labor-ed, and hast not fainted. Nevertheless, I have somwhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.

Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except they repent.

Now; we do not have to learn here what their first love was, but we may rest assured they had deviated from the course of instructions given them. And God dealing with them with a stern hand, plainly told them he would remove their candlestick out of his place, except they repented. In chapter 1: vs.20, Christ says, "The mystery of the seven stars, and the seven golden candlesticks which thou sawest in my right hand. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven golden candlesticks are the SEVEN CHURCHES. (Cont'd on page 4)

Now in studying the history of the seven churches of Asia, we learn that each church had its own performance, and the angels (or messengers) were the STAR performers, and in that sense were held responsible for the action of the church.

The seven golden candlesticks were the seven churches. Now what is a candlestick? It is a receptical for holding a candle. And what is a candle? It is an item designed to give light. Then what is the church? It is a body of people banded together by Christian principles, and the love of God, referred to in 2 Cor.6:16, as being the temple of God.

Every Church of Christ today, composed of a body of people, that deviate from set rules of performance, as authorized by the word of God, are in jeopardy of having their candlestick removed. Then wherein do we liken the church to a candlestick? When a candle is properly placed in a candlestick, it will give light, Luke 8:16. When the church is properly performing it too; will give light. Matt.5:16, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

Then dear brother, sister, let no man deceive you by any means. For that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition.

Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

Remember ye not, that when I was with you I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time.

For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:

Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders.

And with all decievableness of unrighteousness them that perish; because they receive not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

For this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that all might be damned who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. 2 Thess.2:3-12.

Now I have not written these few lines as a threat, or accusation, but I am writing them trying to cultivate love, fellowship, and unity.

Therefore we commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you, an inheritance among all them that are sanctified.

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Publisher's note. See page 5 for another article by the same writer. We have insufficient space herein to publish the second article.

MY OBJECTIONS TO THE DELTA MEETING

By J. C. SPURLIN

First I want to say there are some advantages to such a meet as we found at Delta, Colorado, that is, it does afford an opportunity to meet brethren and sisters we might otherwise never meet. On the other hand it offers a fertile ground for digression. But our greatest objection lies in the fact there is to much money spent for the good that is done.

Two years, wife and I attended the Delta Meeting we spent over $50.00 each time, multiply that by 15 or 16, which is a fair estimate of the number of congregations attending, we would have approximately $750.00.

The camp where we stayed, had sufficient facilities, and accomo - dations that we might have had two day services and thereby proclaimed several good sermons, but the majority of the folks preferred to sight see, and mountain climb, in the day time. Whereas; in my way of think- ing we whiled away a number of opportunities to do good deeds for the Master. For that reason we shall decline any farther effort to attend such meetings. J. C. SPURLIN

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